

Federal Duck Stamp Program

Fact Sheet

On March 16, 1934, Congress passed and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, popularly known as the Duck Stamp Act. J.N. "Ding" Darling, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey and designer of the stamp, purchased the very first Federal Duck Stamp on August 22, 1934, at the Washington, D.C. Post Office. "Duck Stamps," are pictorial stamps produced for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service). They are not valid for postage. The law states that revenue generated by the sale of these stamps be designated to buy or lease wetlands for what has become our National Wildlife Refuge System.

Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland conservation. Ninety-eight cents of every dollar generated by the sales of Federal Duck Stamps goes to purchase or lease wetland habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Federal Duck Stamp Program is considered one of the world's most successful conservation programs and is a highly effective way to conserve America's natural resources.

To date, stamp sales exceed \$700 million, which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has used to help acquire and protect more than 5.2 million acres of wetlands and associated habitats for the National Wildlife Refuge System. In the continental United States, at least one refuge in every state has acquired important waterfowl habitat with Duck Stamp funds.

Federal Duck Stamp Contest

Each fall, the Service hosts the Federal Duck Stamp competition to select the artwork that will provide the design for the next year's stamp. A distinguished panel of judges reviews the hundreds of entries received from some of America's most noted wildlife artists and selects the winner. The Federal Duck Stamp contest, the only art competition

mandated by Congress, is considered the most prestigious wildlife art contest in the country.

Turning a Stamp into Habitat

By July 1st each year, the new Federal Duck Stamp goes on sale for \$15 and is valid until June 30th of the following year. The Service deposits the funds into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. The Fund is administered by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission composed of the Secretary of Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, two U.S. Senators, two members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Not Just for Hunters

In recent years, Duck Stamp revenue has totaled nearly \$25 million annually. In addition to waterfowl, wetland habitat acquired and protected using Federal Duck Stamp funds benefit hundreds of other migratory bird species, fish, and other wildlife - including dozens of threatened and endangered species. Healthy wetland habitat benefit the public by removing pollutants from water supplies, reducing soil erosion, and capturing floodwaters. Refuges purchased with Duck Stamp dollars offer some of the best public outdoor recreation opportunities in the country, and a current Federal Duck Stamp provides free admission to any National Wildlife Refuge that charges an entrance fee. Duck Stamps are available at thousands of post offices and retail outlets where hunting licenses are sold.



2006 - 2007 Federal Duck Stamp

Ivory Billed Woodpecker

Rediscovery of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker, long thought to be extinct, is one recent success of the Federal Duck Stamp Program. The documented sighting of an Ivory Billed Woodpecker at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge was a monumental event in the history of wildlife conservation. The Migratory Bird Conservation Fund contributed over \$38 million to purchase nearly 44,000 acres at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge and more than \$5.25 million to purchase some 10,000 acres at nearby White River National Wildlife Refuge. Today, this region is the only known range of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker.

Legislation to Establish an Electronic Stamp

In 2005, Congressman Ron Kind introduced HR1494, "Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2005" which, if passed, will direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a pilot program under which up to 15 states may issue electronic Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps. Paper stamp fulfillment will still be necessary, but hunters may hunt with the electronic stamp for a specified period while waiting to receive their actual Duck Stamp.

Stamp Qualities

The 2006-2007 pressure-sensitive adhesive Federal Duck Stamp is featured on a dollar bill sized card that is embossed and tells the story of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, celebrating 20 years of wetland conservation.

The water activated stamp was produced on an intaglio press which raises the ink on the surface of the paper, such as in currency. Stamp collectors appreciate the detail achieved through intaglio printing. Intaglio also provides the amount of security necessary to verify a stamp's authenticity.

Value Added Products

The 2006-2007 Federal Duck Stamp is featured on a water activated, perforated, artist signed, pane of one in a quantity of 10,000 selling for \$25 each. This is the second year this type of value added

product has been produced for the Service. The pane of one is expected to generate \$250,000 in revenue.

Uncut press sheets are also offered for sale to the general public for the second year. There are 250 sheets of both the pressure-sensitive adhesive and water activated sheets for sale. These should generate more than \$400,000 in revenue to further conservation of wetlands.

The third product is a First Day Cover (envelope) with a silk cache image of the 2006-2007 Federal Duck Stamp, a bona fide 2006-2007 Federal Duck Stamp, a first class stamp, and First Day cancellation mark. Two thousand First Day covers have been issued and are priced at \$25 each.

In addition to these products First Day of Sale programs and Artist's Commemorative Cards will produce additional sales revenues.

Buy Duck Stamps, Save Wetlands

To purchase a Federal Duck Stamp, please contact

United States Postal Service
www.usps.com
1-800-782-6724 or 1-800-STAMP24

Amplex Corporation
www.duckstamp.com
1-800-852-4897

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Federal Duck Stamp Program
(703) 358-2000
<http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps>**

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